

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3863

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMCONSUL ZAGREB

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 8441

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, YO, AU

SUBJECT: PENDING AUSTRIAN RESPONSE TO YUGOSLAV PROTESTS OVER
AUSTRIAN CENSUS

REF: BELGRADE 4816

1. SUMMARY: FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS GOA HAS DECIDED
TO ANSWER YUGOSLAV PROTEST NOTE BY RECONFIRMING NEED FOR
SPECIAL CENSUS OF SLOVENE MINORITY.

2. MFA POLITICAL DEPARTMENT HEAD AMBASSADOR STEINER
VOLUNTEERED TO EMBASSY POLCOUN, IN COURSE OF LATTER'S VISIT
ON OCT. 1 TO FONOFF ON OTHER MATTERS, THAT GOA WILL PROBABLY
MAKE RESTRAINED ORAL RESPONSE LATER THIS WEEK TO EARLIER
YUGOSLAV DEMARCHE ON SUBJECT. GOA RESPONSE WILL TAKE FORM
OF LOW-KEY PRESENTATION AIMED AT TRYING ONCE AGAIN TO
CONVINCE YUGOSLAWS THAT END PURPOSE OF MINORITY CENSUS
IS TO FACILITATE NOT HINDER SLOVENS MINORITY'S EXERCISE
OF ITS FULL MINORITY RIGHTS.

3. PRESENTATION WILL MAKE POINT THAT 1955 STATE TREATY
DOES NOT PROVIDE ANY MECHANISM FOR ESTABLISHING OR
DETERMINING AREAS INHABITED BY MIXED POPULATION AND THAT
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"SPECIAL CENSUS" WHICH IS SOVEREIGN RIGHT OF EVERY STATE,

WOULD ACCOMPLISH THIS PURPOSE. ACCORDING TO STEINER, GOA PRESENTATION WILL PROBABLY ALSO CONTAIN SOME DETAILS CONCERNING PROPOSED "SPECIAL CENSUS", AGAIN WITH PURPOSE OF ATTEMPTING TO REASSURE YUGOSLAVS THAT CONFIDENTIALITY OF INDIVIDUAL HEAD COUNT WILL BE MAINTAINED AND THEREBY ASSURING SLOVENE MINORITY OF FAIR TREATMENT.

4. COMMENT: APPARENT GOA DECISION TO GO FORWARD WITH "SPECIAL CENSUS" POSITION VIS-A-VIS SLOVENE MINORITY AND YUGOSLAV SUPPORTERS, IN SPITE OF THEIR REGISTERED STRONG OPPOSITION, REPRESENTS AT SAME TIME ACT OF POLITICAL WILL BY CHANCELLOR KREISKY TO PUT IMMEDIATE DOMESTIC POLITICAL INTERESTS OF HIS PARTY ABOVE MORE GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS OF COUNTRY. SOCIALISTS FEEL THEY ARE TAKING ENOUGH OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL BATTERING ON SEVERAL CURRENT ISSUES, MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH APPEARS TO BE INFLATION, WITHOUT TAKING POLITICALLY VULNERABLE POSITION AT VARIANCE TO TWO NON-MARXIST PARTIES IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WHO FAVOR SPECIAL CENSUS.

5. ALL THREE PARTIES ARE SHOWING INCREASED NERVOUSNESS OVER SLOVENE MINORITY ISSUE. SOCIALISTS ARE NOW IN EFFECT IN LOCK STEP WITH PEOPLE'S PARTY AND FREEDOM PARTY IN VIEW OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE OF OUTCOME OF MARCH 1975 ELECTIONS IN CARINTHIA (PROVINCE IN WHICH SLOVENE MINORITY LOCATED) AS INDICATOR OF LIKELY TREND IN 1975 FALL NATIONAL ELECTIONS. SOCIALISTS, WHO CONTROL GOVERNMENT IN CARINTHIA AND AT FEDERAL LEVEL, ARE THEREFORE WILLING TO GAMBLE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ISSUE BY SLOVENE MINORITY OR YUGOSLAVIA RATHER THAN ENDANGER THEIR HOPED FOR RECONFIRMATION IN POWER IN LATE 1975.
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